

Today's Job Market: *Not Your Parents' Job Market*

By Connie Blaine

Then—A college education was a ticket to a high-paying job right after graduation.

Now—College degrees are less important to employers than your specific skills. Wages also vary greatly depending on the industry or your major.

Then—College graduates could start in a high-level position in a company based on the degree alone.

Now—Graduates also need work experience in the field to get hired. Even so, they may need to take an entry-level job to start out.

Then—"Technical college" was for people who couldn't cut it in a "real" college, and would not get you as good a career in the end.

Now—Technical training is more affordable and available than a four-year college and can lead to careers as high-paying, in-demand and satisfying as many requiring bachelor's degrees. Many top-performing students are choosing the technical training path.

Then—Once you got a good job, you stayed there for life, and the company "took care of you."

Now—Nobody is taking care of you, but you. Most people change jobs at least seven times in their career. You must manage your own career on an ongoing basis.

Then—Manufacturing jobs were about the only good-paying jobs that didn't require a post-high school education.

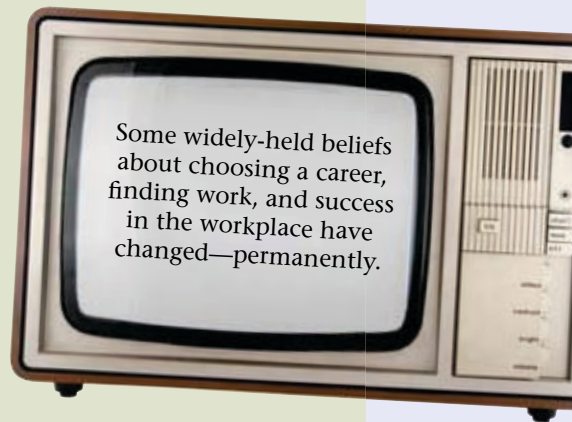
Now—Manufacturing jobs are in decline, and those that remain are not as secure or high-paying as in the past. Post-high school training is needed for any good job.

Then—A high school diploma qualified you for many jobs that could provide a livable wage.

Now—Post-high school training and career planning are essential for more than a poverty-level income, and for advancement.

Then—Be loyal to your company and it will provide for you now and in your old age.

Now—The only guarantee is that there are no guarantees. Layoffs, downsizing and takeovers put your job security, and your retirement at risk. It's up to you to manage your career and save for your retirement. ©



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